

Some Account of the

TRIALS

OF

Five Notorious JESUITS,
Popish PRIESTS & TRAYTORS.

(VIZ.)

THOMAS WHITE, *alias* WHITEBREAD,

WILLIAM HARCOURT,

JOHN FENWICK,

JOHN GAVERN, *alias* GAWEN,

and

ANTHONY TURNER.

Found Guilty of HIGH-TREASON.

For conspiring to Murder the KING,

Subvert the Government, root out the Pro-
testant Religion, and establish Popery, &c.

On a fair Tryal by virtue of a Com-

mission of Oyer and Terminer at the Old-

Bailey, June the 13th. 1679.

L O N D O N,

Printed for R. G. Anno Dom. 1679.

After the Commission read, and the Juries Impannelled, and their appearances Recorded, Six Prisoners were Arraigned, viz. *Thomas White* alias *Whitebread*, apprehended on the first discovery of the Plot, a little Lean very old man in mean Gray Cloaths, who was Provincial of the *English* Jesuits, and should have been, (had their Cursed Design hit) Bishop of *Canterbury*; *William Harcourt* taken not above five Weeks ago near *Long-Acre*, an Ancient Tall man in Black Habit with a Perriwig; a person though no good Orator, very Politick, and often mentioned in *Coleman's* Tryal and Letters as a grand Instrument of mischief; *John Fenwick* a middle-Aged man, somewhat Gentilely Dressed in a lightish Wig, and Gray Campaine Coat; *John Gavern* alias *Gawen* a Short, well-set man in Gray Cloaths, and looking very plain and ordinary as a Country-man, but in truth a person of Exquisite parts and Oratory, who mannaged almost the whole Defence on the behalf of his Fellow Prisoners with a great deal of Briskness, Subtily and fine Language; *Anthony Turner* a person in Mean Habit, short Perriwig; one that

that said little for himself; and *James Corker*, who presenting a Petition, alledging that he had not his Witnesses ready, was put off as to his Tryal till the next day; so that the Court at present proceeded only with the five first named.

Their Tryal was very tedious, lasting from before nine a Clock in the Morning, to seven or Eight in the Evening; the particulars whereof we do not here pretend fully and exactly to relate, as well because 'tis not to be done in a single Sheet, as especially for that we are assured there will shortly by the special care of Authority be a compleat and punctual Account published, to which we refer the more Curious Reader, only designing here to give a brief but true Narrative of the most observable points for the present satisfaction of the common people, that they may know what Justice was done them, and what in general was proved upon them.

They were all five Charged in one Indictment specially drawn for High Treason, and aggravated with all the most Horrid Circumstances imaginable. First, that they Conspired to Kill and Destroy His Sacred Majesty, and this declared in a threefold Overt act, by Hire-

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ing Grove and Pickering (the first for fifteen hundred Pounds; the second for thirty thousand Masses to Shoot or Stab him, by Hiring four Irish Ruffians to Murther His Majesty at Windsor; by bribing Wakeman for fifteen thousand Pounds to Poyson him. Secondly, To Subvert the Government, Extirpate the Protestant Religion, and Introduce Popery, &c. Their Jury were very Substantial Gentlemen, and they made Peremptory Challenges to all that had been on the Tryals of Goleman, or any others concerned in this Plot.

Old Father Whitehead and Fenwick on their Arraignment insisted that they had formerly been brought to Tryal, and ought not to be twice put in Jeopardy of their Lives for the same Fact: But this vain pretence was refuted, by shewing that though they were once called to the Bar, yet the Jury was never Charged with them, and consequently they were never in any such Jeopardy; and besides here was much new Matter in their Indictment, nor had they any Record to shew that they were so formerly Arraigned; vvith vvich seeming to be satisfied they (vvith the rest) pleaded not Guilty.

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As to their Traiterous Design of Murthering the King, it was proved upon four of them: that at a general Consult of Jesuits 24th April 1678. they signed a Resolution to that purpose; that *Grove* and *Pichering* were entertained to Kill the King, and what reward they were to have. That four *Irish* men were to do the same Villanous Act at *Windsor*; and that Fourscore Pounds were allotted them for that service, and some small Addition made by *Coleman* for Expedition. That *Whitebread* and *Harcourt* were particularly and principally concerned in these Transactions, with several other Intrigues too tedious here to be specified.

It was further proved that *Gawern* had been appointed to mannage Affairs in and about *Staffordshire*, and one of the Evidence (who had not before appeared against others, nor was Acquainted formerly with *Dr. Oates* or *Mr. Bedloe*, so that his Testimony was wholly new, which he very Modestly and Judiciously delivered) Proved that the said Prisoner had held Consultations in the Countrey for Murthering the King and Subverting the Government, &c. which was likewise confirmed by another; so that upon the whole matter there were

were four Witnesses against one of the Prisoners, three against another, and against all of them two each Crime, being all of the same nature and Horrid Intention of destroying the King, and Subverting the Government.

There was likewise a Letter produced, and proved by a very worthy Gentleman to have been taken amongst Harcourt's Papers, that purported to be a Summons to a Jesuit to appear at the said Consult or Congregation of that Society, on the 24th of April; in which were Directions to this effect, *That they should not come up before the day, nor appear much abroad in Town, for fear of a discovery of the Design, which its own nature required Secrecy:* This Letter the said Harcourt owned to have been written by a Friend of his, but would have avoided the true meaning thereof with a forc'd Interpretation; that such Design intended nothing but chusing an Officer of their Brotherhood: But the words could not with any tolerable sense be capable of such Construction: And therefore after all the fair Glosses they had put upon it, the same was referred to the consideration of the Jury.

The Prisoners made a great deal of stir, and had

had procured divers persons from *St. Omers*, all Roman Catholicks, and most of them young Popish Students there, to invalidate the Evidence of one of the Principal Evidences; But as they did not well agree in their Tale, but appeared to have been brought hither meerly to serve the Prisoners, so the same was utterly confuted by Corroborating Evidence for the King. For whereas those young Sophisters (ready enough to assert any thing that their Superiors would suggest or have them to do) maintained that Mr. Oates was at *St. Omers* all along throughout *April* and *May* 1678. and so could not be at the Consult on the 24th. of *April*. He on the other side produced several Substantial Credible Witnesses that saw him then in and about *London*, and particularly one Gentleman Swore, that on the first *Monday* in that *May* he Dined with him: Nay one that was himself a Papist, and supposed a Priest, Swore that he then saw him at *Arundel House*. Nor were they more lucky in several other of their Allegations, which occasioned sometimes great Shouts from the people, to see how industriously, and yet how vainly they went about to Justify themselves with pretences equally foolish and false. Never

Never had Malefactors a more fair and equal Tryal, nor any Court of Justice more patient to hear and examine all that the Prisoners could alleadge for themselves; nor was the method of proceeding less mild and gentle. For whereas they might all have been dealt withall and justly Condemned for Treason as Priests, that was not insisted on, so moderate are Protestants against punishing any meerly for being Priests, though that be most reasonably made Capital by our Laws; no cause have they therefore, or any of their Faction beyond the Seas, to complain of harsh usage or Clamour about Persecution: It was not for their Religion they were tryed, but for their abominable Treasons which were most evidently made out against them.

So that after a full hearing both of all the Witnesses they could produce, (though all Romanists, who yet were Impartially heard and received) and whatever they had to say for themselves (which rather consisted in flourishes and little Captious Tricks of Subtily, than any solid Defence to the matters they stood Charged with,) they were all most justly, and to the great satisfaction of all unprejudiced Auditors, Convicted of the High Treason they were Indicted for.

F I N I S.